1. Goal

To improve substantially OU’s ability to plan and execute research, scholarship and works of creative expression (hereafter “research”) on the Norman Campus via more effective communication among the Office of the Vice President for Research (OVPR) and colleges, departments and individual faculty.

2. Strategy

Emulating the longstanding and highly successful Graduate Liaison (GL) program operated by the Graduate College, the Norman Campus Office of the Vice President for Research will establish faculty Research Liaisons (RLs) within all academic departments, schools, and programs¹ involved in organized research. Initially, the RL program will be a two-year pilot starting in CY 2011.

3. Qualifications and Expectations

Research Liaisons will be tenured regular faculty members having demonstrated research experience and an active research program. The normal term of service, once the two-year pilot program is completed, is three years, renewable (consecutively) once. RLs will receive University service credit in the same manner as GLs. To ensure that the RL program serves as a professional development opportunity for faculty, OVPR will provide appropriate training in research administration and leadership development for the RL cohort and meet with it as a whole on a regular basis. The latter will, in particular, stimulate interaction across colleges and programs.

The job of the RL during the two-year pilot is to serve as a

- Resource within the academic program for communicating and answering questions regarding research opportunities, policy changes and other information provided by OVPR. Funding opportunity announcements will continue to be sent directly to faculty.
- Resource to OVPR regarding faculty research capabilities and plans. Note that the RL has no purview over faculty activities, but rather maintains a working knowledge of each faculty member’s scholarly efforts in order to maximize faculty opportunity for success and ensure effective engagement between faculty and OVPR.

If the pilot is successful, additional duties may be added. Note that Associate Deans will play an important role in local coordination of RL activities.

4. Compensation

Each RL will receive $2,500 in discretionary funding per calendar year of service (including summers).

5. Selection and Timing

OVPR will communicate specific RL selection criteria by 1 November 2010, and each academic program will forward to OVPR, by 15 December 2010, the name of the individual chosen to serve as their Research Liaison during the two-year pilot program.

6. Expected Benefits

The Research Liaison program will help faculty be more informed about opportunities, policy changes, and overall directions in research both locally and nationally. Additionally, it will position OU to respond much more quickly, and effectively, to unexpected opportunities, and also provide a framework for assisting faculty in developing or enhancing their research programs.

7. Relationship to Aspire 2020

The Research Liaison program will create a new culture of engagement and communication across programs and between programs and OVPR, thus maximizing the ability of faculty to plan and execute their scholarly research agendas.

¹ Owing to the size of some colleges, one RL may be adequate for multiple programs.